

PLCs - The Daniel Wertz Way



Daniel Wertz Elementary School is Making it Happen!



WE ARE

Daniel Wertz Elementary School is located on the south west side of Evansville, in a suburban part of town. Daniel Wertz is part of the Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation, or EVSC, which serves over 22,000 students, ranging from Pre-K through 12th Grade.

OUR STUDENTS & FAMILIES

Our school is home to about 350 students, in grades Pre-K through 5. 74% of our students receive free or reduced lunches. About 14% of our students receive special education services, ranging from general education inclusion to self-contained, for students with multiple disabilities. In 2014-15, our school earned a School Grade of B, up from an F just 3 years prior with 82.6% of our students showing high or typical growth in ELA and 90.8% in Math. Daniel Wertz serves a variety of families, including many non-traditional family structures.

OUR TEACHERS

We have 22 teachers that are teamed in groups of two or three, depending on enrollment. Our staff also includes four special education teachers with six assistants. Our teachers meet daily in PLC groups to collaborate, plan lessons, and analyze data to drive instruction. We utilize three instructional assistants to work with targeted students to improve performance on specific skills.

OUR PROMISING PRACTICE

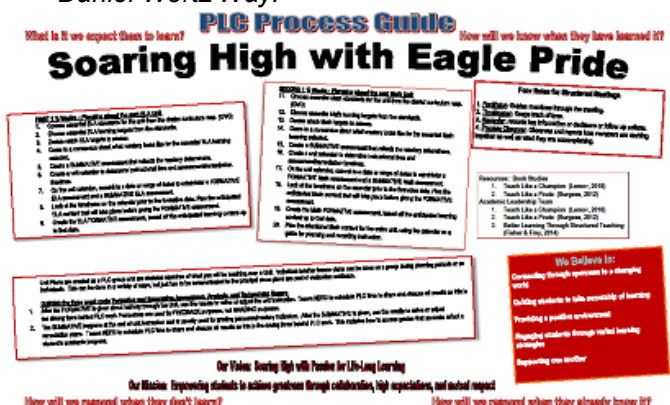
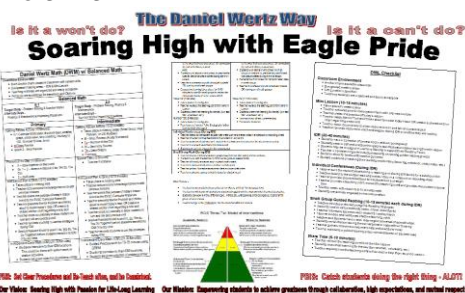
Most schools have a motto, and often times they are designed to encourage appropriate behavior or academic goals for students. At Daniel Wertz, we call it, "The Daniel Wertz Way." Our staff also lives by this motto in terms of our instructional strategies.

Our staff collaborated to clearly define instructional expectations, using the workshop model for both ELA and Math. Through this work, we created a process guide for "Daniel Wertz Literacy" and "Daniel Wertz Balanced Math," both using the workshop model as a foundation. By creating a common process and language, student achievement has improved because there is a continuation of instructional strategies from one grade level to the next.

When we recently implemented Professional Learning Communities in our school, we hit bumps along the way. Near the end of our first year of PLCs, our Leadership Team realized that we needed to create the "Daniel Wertz Way" to run an effective PLC. Using this PLC process guide and common Unit Plan Template, implementation of our PLCs became clearer to the entire staff, and much more efficient.

OUR STEPS

At the start of the school year, all teachers are given a laminated "Daniel Wertz Way" instructional placemat that contains all of the process guides we use for quick reference. New teachers can quickly see what our teaching foundations are based upon to bring us all to the same page. Our Leadership Team monitors the implementation of our building level strategies and makes revisions to our processes as needed. As we identify new needs, we will then work to create a new process guide for that need. Currently, we are working on a systematic way to provide support for kids with additional academic, behavior, or social/emotional needs. Once finished, this too will become part of the "Daniel Wertz Way."



For more information about our school or "The Daniel Wertz Way", please contact Principal Douglas L. Mills Douglas.Mills@evsc.k12.in.us or visit our website: http://www.edlinesites.net/pages/Daniel_Wertz_Elementary_School.